READ (Registry of EPA Applications and Databases)

John Harman
Environmental Protection Specialist
OEI
(202) 566-0748
harman.john@epa.gov

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The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) has created an automated online system to catalogue its information systems. The Registry of EPA Applications and Databases (READ) stores in one place basic information about the Agency's applications, databases, and models.

For each information system in READ, EPA collects basic metadata (descriptive information), including a short abstract, contact information, and the responsible programmatic office. If applicable, URL links provide access to additional websites, a list of chemicals tracked/regulated by the system, and the system's data dictionary. Query functions allow searches that identify the information systems built on a particular platform or using a specific database maintenance system.

When fully populated, it will be possible to identify in one place all those EPA information systems that have publicly accessible data, or that are geospatial tools, or that collect data from industry or from states. It also will act as a single doorway for collecting information necessary to meet various EPA objectives, including the target architecture and security issues, thus minimizing the number of times the owners of the information systems must respond to data calls.

In addition to serving as a one-stop source for information about information systems, READ allows EPA to improve the management of its information resources, an objective of the Clinger-Cohen Act. Creating a registry of information systems also meets the Agency's commitments to the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A130 and OMB Circular A-11.

EPA will keep the metadata in READ current by providing the owner of each information system with a user-specific identification code and password. Using a URL link, the owner will access his/her record(s) at least annually to update or enter any requested new information.

READ is built on an integrated database that also inventories EPA chemicals, data elements, terms and references, and XML tags and schema. It is based on, and an extension of, an international standard, ISO/IEC 11179, thus conforming to OMB requirements. As an inventory of information systems, READ facilitates EPA's movement toward its enterprise architecture and ultimately the Federal Enterprise Architecture.

READ can be accessed at www.epa.gov/read.